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What the plain view perceives is neither obvious nor obscure

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WE begin publication of this journal because social changes have now begun to reveal to the generations of our time their cumulative effect in the discernible shape of a new civilization. There is in immediate prospect a civilization which will be different in its assumptons and in its manifestations, that is to say, different in religion and philosophy, in culture, in economic and social relations, and in achievements, from the Victorian age which fell into the last violent phases of dissolution on the outbreak of the first world war. It is our deepest directive purpose in this review to help men and women of our time to come to a fully individualized consciousness of themselves in relation to this new age, and to form a true and detailed conception of the distinctiveness and scope of the civilization which is to be achieved.

If we look back upon Victorian England, we can see its general characteristics, by which it is distinguished from the preceding age. We know these characteristics as we know current topics of conversation, for criticism of the public school and the empire, puritanical religion and laissez faire economics, has been an established orthodoxy long enough to give daring reactionary views a chance to regain the fashion. But the moral and social habits with which the identity of the Victorian age was bound up have been attacked by greater forces than those which the intellectuals command. Events on every front of social change have undermined their foundations. The age has lost its identity. But the succeeding age which we have in the making has yet to find itself. It is more than time that we turned both from saying rude things about an age that is historically past, and also from clever attempts to rehabilitate the institutions of that age, and with confidence in ourselves set out to form a conception of our own new civilization, a shared consciousness of the good life which we have it in our power to create. Of course there is no moral break with the immediate past: we have much in common with our fathers and owe much to the creative ideas which divided them; but the need for us to find fresh or more developed solutions of all the permanent problems of civilization forces upon us a renewal of life which in the outcome will be a new phase in the sequence of history.

We shall, then, be concerned in this journal not only with the survey and scrutiny of what is going on in the world, but also with concepts, principles, and ideals, whose justification will be their claim to add a precious seeing to the eye that would look upon the historically given world of our time in the light of present opportunities and established values. Such ideas will not be either generalizations from current social facts nor propaganda. They will be universals of experience which ought to have their due influence in the making of any civilization. For we believe that liberty, equality, and fraternity are sovereign truths of human association; and that truth, beauty, and goodness are polar ideals of the human spirit. But they are not dogmas and not rules. They are directive, advisory, abstract, a stimulus and a challenge, formative of mind and spirit, but requiring us to test their validity and win new insight into their meaning for our age.

Persons of high spirit and imagination have a most vivid sense of personal quality. They fail and fall short like everybody else, but it is not admonition they are in need of, as a mettlesome pony does

not need, and will not bear, the touch, or the approach, of a whip: they know, better than any, the loveliness and fragility of what they have spoiled or endangered. But who has found it possible during these thirty years of frustration and crisis to live on that level of spiritual intensity and clarity? It has been hard enough to maintain the groundwork of solid personality, to have retained any seriousness of purpose, not to have become altogether shallow and opportunist. We do not chiefly need, most of us, to be recalled to religion or to morality, but to be restored to the conditions of happy affirmative life. If, as you may think, it is the apathy, the folly, the self-interest of the normal human spirit which has turned the light of day into a continuing night, there is at any rate just a possibility that, scourged by the terrors of evil, ordinary human nature will be found capable of jumping into another orbit. The opportunity is offered by the new world which the surgery of events has now made not powerless to be born. The world may be better because it has become worse, has tasted and swallowed the worst that unlimited violence and cunning can do. The issue has been forced, and the outcome of the trial of who shall kill whom is that victory has not passed to the forces of opportunism allied to reaction. Civilization has been saved. But not the civilization we have known. It is the possibility of civilization that has been saved; the continuity, not the identity. There is such a thing as situational therapy. We are now facing a new situation which if we begin to be equal to its demands will give us the power and the opportunity to restore ourselves and the society of which we are made and which we make. And if we are restored to happier times, though human nature will not have been altered, its better qualities may predominate and prevail; for human behaviour can be profoundly altered, and is indeed dramatically responsive to every kind of influence.

This is the faith which nourishes the purpose of our venture in this journal. We believe that it is a faith which our readers will be able and glad to share, and we look for the support of their active goodwill.

COMMENTARY

DAY-SPRING? In the period between the two wars, long before Germany overran the Continent, there were not many countries (not England, certainly) which escaped spiritual occupation by the forces of reaction. However confused and unpurposeful (even unconscious) this occupation may have been, the moral suffering it imposed was unforgettably definite: frustration and fatalistic gloom afflicted even those who were not affected by actual privation; and unemployment and the drift to war were only two of the most obvious immediate causes. It is unreasonable, therefore, to look for a buoyant response to the first promises now appearing of a new order. It will take more than the Education Act, the White Papers on Health and on Full Employment, the better-than-Beveridge social security scheme, the tentative approach to the world organization of permanent peace: it will take more than the abundance of promise and plan to undo the evil which has implanted deep-rooted

scepticism and pessimism in the people. (It is taking more than the Cripps offer, of course it is, to clean the ground of prolific suspicions and plant new sentiments in the minds of profoundly antagonized Indians.) The question is, which is the real weather, the tender day-spring of political promise or the night frosts of popular scepticism? ("When we have done this job for you, Ernie, are we coming back to the dole?") As Mass Observation pointed out in "The Journey Home," the scepticism is the natural result of the disenchantment which followed the high hopes raised by the catchwords which fed enthusiasm for the last war. Is it merely self-protection, this refusal to be taken in again, or is it prophecy? It is, at any rate, an indication of how long the promised reforms are overdue: they are so long overdue that they have ceased to be looked for. That is one meaning of public scepticism. Yet *The Times,* with the bluntness of perception which seems particularly to distinguish superior persons, remarked in an editorial on the White Paper on Full Employment: "The movement of public opinion has kept pace—it has more than kept pace—with that of Government policy. The idea of an expansionist economy and the broad principles governing expansion are now widely accepted by men of affairs as well as by economists, and are becoming increasingly familiar to the general public. So great has been the change during the past ten years or so that it is still hard to measure the momentous step forward which has been taken."

The point not to be missed is that there are signs of a new outlook and a change of heart and the appearance of new assumptions in quarters where these things had not been looked for; and it will be a tragedy if exasperated progressive minds do not equally forsake old habits, and greet the arrival of their slow superiors not without amusement, but also not without generous welcome. There is a time to be intransigent, and there is a time to have eager adventurous belief in the great possibilities of national education in new policies. The present duty of the leaders of progress is to be (boldly) less sceptical than the rank and file inevitably are. It would mightily help the renewal of life in this country if some of us had something of the vitality and glowing faith in the future of the youthful maquisards.

UNACKNOWLEDGED LEGISLATORS. It is right, and encouraging, that the first of the post-war reforming measures to go on the Statute-book is an education act. For if educational policy is not sensitive and responsive to the plain need for new solutions, and lags behind, it is at cross purposes with the reforms which do get through, and the nation's renewal of life is diseased from birth.

The literary education of all gentlemen, which once formed a common standard and ideal of education, long ago lost its dominant influence in an industrial civilization, and as a people we are now (increasingly, since the war) more literate in technology than in letters. Of course an education that is reduced to specialized and vocational training is Hamlet without the Prince of Denmark; but the old literary education in the classics has itself become a specialism, because it does not fill the need for a modern humanist discipline. It nevertheless still occupies the place it does not fill, and until it has been replaced and formally

reduced to a recognized specialism the poison of its putrefaction will not be eliminated: it still contributes in the secondary schools to the destruction of intelligences not apt for its studies; its past influence encourages an outlook which regards the white-collar occupations as more civilized than those of the cloth cap; its adepts destined for public office are still apt to be superior to the need for vocational qualifications and training. The Education Act at last frames the policy and sets up the machinery designed to correct this distortion of values, but it will take a vigorous public opinion to enforce the proper social estimation of all talents and callings without which the Act will fall short of its informing intention.

The social unity to which the Act in its due fulfilment will contribute will be the unity of a social order, and not necessarily (nor even probably) the unity of a common educated outlook. The modern humanist discipline which is so badly missing will not, if we get it, form that common body of educated opinion either; nor will it form a new ruling class, nor another sect of experts. If it is to be worth having, it will attract and fertilize the choice and brightest spirits of the age, and give them maturity and contemporary bearings. There must be no taint about it of propagandist or other ulterior motives; it is not to be an advanced *ad hoc* course conceived in a fit of enthusiasm by a government person, or business idealist, or common philanthropist; it is to be begotten in the lavish and loving spirit of the elder Montaigne and conceived in the body of fruitful educational practice. Nothing is too good for the gifted sons of mass democracy, and there is no reason why the masses should not produce, and idolize, men and women as sensitive, intelligent, and creative as any who have glorified the earth. Indeed, it should be so.

ACKNOWLEDGED LEGISLATORS. In this war, the strait gate of the War Office Selection Boards has kept privileged incompetents out of the commissioned ranks of the army. That was an easy remedy for an old evil. In earlier days, when the likely success of these gentlemen as place-seekers had to be reckoned with, devices were found to mitigate the public consequences. Hume thought that the principal beauty of a constitution was to make government fool-proof and knave-proof. But the automatic frustration of fools in power is less a mitigation of folly than an immense stultification of government. In consequence, the problem of some public servants has made a problem of the whole public service, a mischief that was local and temporary has been cured by making it general and systematic; to secure for the organ immunity from the consequences of disease, we have semi-paralysed its ability to function. Nevertheless, we cannot (as we seem disposed to try to do) deal more or less easily with this intractable problem of the public service by treating it *de novo* as only a problem of some public servants. A suitably planned selection board could very easily pick candidates with the qualities which we think we should like to see in a civil servant. But, assuming that these are rather different qualities from those we are so accustomed to find, the insertion of round pegs does not alter the shape of square holes. We should hardly be better off.

Our public men have been saying for long enough that for the purposes of modern government we need a new type of civil servant, one who will combine the drive of a business executive with the restraint and national outlook of a trained public official. Some put their faith in a new system of training which will preserve the best of the old traditions and introduce new methods and a modern outlook. A committee has produced an excellent report on the training of civil servants. Ministers have circulated memoranda round their departments in which they urge the members of their staff to use their initiative and act on their own responsibility. At least one Minister has attempted to tear red tape to shreds and defy established procedure. The Prime Minister has appealed for plain English. It is simply kicking against the pricks; as vain as were disarmament conferences in a world of power politics. The civil servant is probably a little better than most of us at doing the job he has been given to do, and we might as well let him get on with it so long as it is there to be done. But the job itself ought to give us a lot to think about. Red tape is historically wound so intimately round our vital organs that it is dangerous to meddle with it and impossible to leave it alone. Some of the most necessary safeguards against the abuse of power are tied up with it. There is a headache for our political thinkers in this problem, and for all of us there is plenty that we can usefully talk about. But let us confine the discussion to "The Civil Service: Its Cause and Cure," and regard even the highest (or almost the highest) civil servant as a fellow victim.

POLITICS ARE NOT ENOUGH. Lord Hankey in the debate in the Lords on the Atlantic Charter deprecated very earnestly the tendency of statesmen to make these solemn declarations. Lord Hankey is a very experienced politician, and he showed that he knows too well how embarrassing to realistic policies such ideal commitments may be. But perhaps he was also deploring the damage to public standards which follows from the disenchantment which normally succeeds the high expectations raised by idealistic public utterances. One of the most enlightened and inspiring speeches ever made at Geneva was made by Sir Samuel Hoare not long before he set his hand to the infamous Hoare-Laval plan. That kind of shock engenders complete cynicism and destroys the foundation of public faith and hope. But unless politics are to be founded solely upon interest, the sheer bid for power of race or class or creed, which is nothing less than perpetual war and the inescapable rule of unlimited force and fraud, there must be solemn declarations establishing recognition of moral dues and claims, obligations which mitigate and transform the conflict of interests. The supreme reason why France and the United States have been regarded not only as civilized nations, but also as nursing mothers of civilized nationhood, and indispensable to mankind, is the living attachment of their peoples to the ideals proclaimed by the Revolution and in the preambles to the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. Such declarations are not rights enforceable at law, but they are sacred principles which statesmen cannot violate without outrage, without provoking sooner or later passionate repudiation. (We have seen it; we

have been near enough to be warmed by the glow of that ardour in resurgent France.) Epochs of social progress are inaugurated and sustained by such declarations. To cheapen their currency by multiplying them without faith is more ruinous than financial inflation. It is not even enough that they shall not be uttered for propagandist purposes: it is necessary that they shall not seem to be uttered as propaganda, and that they shall not be taken as propaganda. Otherwise, politics are flirting with damnation, playing with the evils with which the Nazis have cursed the times. Every one of us has a tongue which can lightly speak mischief in this matter.

It is by the continuing influence of declared, adopted, and cherished ideals that society becomes "indeed a contract, a partnership in every virtue, and in all perfection." Is it an accident that the nation which has attempted to subdue all others has no historical or living attachment to declared universal ideals? It is historically true that again and again peoples have been rallied to their declared ideals, and have given substance to the faith and hope of mankind. In such nations there is abounding trust; in others there can be nothing but abiding distrust.

SOME ASPECTS OF COMING MORALS

THE years between the wars, we are often told, were cynical and aimless, especially for British and American youth. Now youth has a purpose. It has tasted of that which is noble, and has no relish any more for the sickly caducities that mocked it in the years of illusion.

This, if it be not all the truth has much truth in it. There is great eagerness, as well as a vast opportunity for a nicer justice and a wider humanity in our sick and distracted world grimly battling for its future health. In other words, there is promise in the shape of morals to come, and if we are heartened by the belief that a world which can endure so much can also achieve greatly, there is no justification for attempting to damp such hopes. On the other hand, if critical enquiry is to be branded as "cynicism," if our only thought is to become fundamentalists on the rebound, our condition is parlous in the extreme. Justice and humanity, though they may often be very plain to read in particular and simple instances, have a prodigious complexity in their range. Even if the world stood still the just and humane would have an enormous task before them. Men would have to improve their sympathetic understanding of human life far beyond its present level of sympathy or understanding. And the world, that is to say, the humanly alterable world, changes. Let it be granted that the greater principles of justice and humanity have been understood, not perfectly but pretty competently, by the wiser of our forefathers, and indeed by the good sense of the common man, that it would be an insult to humanity, and a ludicrous exaggeration of our own abilities if the human race had had to wait for a brand new morality from *us*. The fact remains that changes in our social structure and mode of life, due, among other things, to new ways of increasing human resources and accelerating the use of them, bring new opportunities and may frequently require an altera-

tion of our standards in a vast variety of unsuspected and challenging ways.

Labouring these truisms, I have spoken as if justice and humanity were the substance of morals; and I submit that it is so. There is little in morals that escapes them, or that they express only inadequately. Moreover, for the present purposes, it seems unnecessary to institute a precise technical enquiry into their boundaries and mutual relations. For most purposes the clue to justice may be found by a resolute pursuit of the implications of fairness—fair-dealing, fair opportunities, fair consideration to every private man wherever he may be, whether he, or he and his friends, be with the mob or against it. Surely it is abundantly plain that justice, so regarded, while it may be simple to state, is infinitely subtle, infinitely surprising in its applications. But fairness without humanity, fair-mindedness in which there was nothing tender and nothing generous would clearly be something less, something much less, than morality involves. I do not mean simply that cruelty is not redeemed by being impartially exercised upon all its victims; for it might be argued that a sadist is unjust to each of his victims although he may not discriminate unjustly between them; and I am not now discussing how far justice and love, or justice and pity, would be accurately separable in a perfect being. What I am saying is only that, among men, the two are not identical, and that human morality requires them both. It is easy and very common to be both unjustly and unwisely generous. Indeed the principal and the very arduous moral problem in every human situation is to discover how men of good will, kind-hearted and well-meaning men, are also to be fair-minded, are to be well-doers, not merely well-meaners or well-wishers, are to act *ex aequo et bono*, that is to say, with justice and *effective* philanthropy, philanthropy that *succeeds* in doing good.

In what follows I shall try to consider certain problems, though but a few, in the application of justice and humanity to the altered and altering conditions of modern man's existence. For pretty obvious reasons, most of the problems on which I shall touch are problems, very largely, about collective action. Readers should remind themselves, however (and with some assiduity), that the moral responsibility for collective action falls upon the men and women who act collectively, upon the leaders for leading, upon the led for being led, upon co-operators for co-operating, upon obstructors for being obstructive. I hope I shall not trespass into the field of prophecy, but I have to deal with the future and chiefly with the near or nearish future. Accordingly I shall try to consider certain aspects of the shape and the shaping of morals to come which either are or are thought by many of our more responsible contemporaries to be problems we shall soon have to settle.

We do not need the gift of prophecy to be able to foresee that the peace of the world will be a dominating moral problem for many years to come. In the long run, some of us may think, there is little hope for such peace, and for all the good that is impossible without lasting peace, unless nations as well as individuals adopt the device of government, that is to say, abandon the use of violence at their own discretion, even for self-defence, real or alleged, and institute a supernational power

which is capable of coercing any one of them or any *bloc* of them, and, in the best form of the device, is the instrument of the majority decision of the instituting powers. If so, our long-range duty is to promote such a scheme. In the shorter run, however, it is very improbable indeed that such a supernational authority will be instituted. All the signs point to a mere alliance of victorious powers, each with its own military forces, each acting at its own discretion, and united only by promises and by presumed interest.

One of the main objects of the better forms of the device of government is that everyone should be compelled to do what is generally agreed to be in the general interest with the consequence not only that the obstructive are forced to toe the line, but also that those who agree with the policy will not have the chance to evade playing their own part in it either by shifting the burden to other shoulders or by announcing, often very reasonably, that they cannot by themselves do what requires collective action. When there is only a promissory league and not a governed order, the moral problem is more complicated, but its principal outlines, all the same, are pretty clear. If the promissory league has world power, it should exercise the power with justice and humanity, with humanity towards all, with a resolute determination not to favour itself or its friends at anyone else's expense. If the promissory league shows signs of disintegration, and if the promises of its members are contingent upon a collective union which no longer exists, it cannot be assumed that any given member of the league either could or should undertake the collective burden all by itself. In so far, however, as any given member can promote the cause of justice and humanity in the world with weaker support from its allies than it contemplated when the promissory league was formed, it still has that very duty, more onerous but not less obligatory.

The threat or the use of arms is only a part of this problem. It is at least equally important to diminish the causes of national friction, to be just and humane with that purpose. Among these causes of friction, restriction of access to raw materials all over the world is plainly a constant irritation. Within the limits of nationalism the "have-nots" look askance at offers from the "haves" to give them free access. They know well enough that harbours can be fortified, that national policies change at the discretion of the possessors and that other people's liberal concessions have an altered look when the other people are at war. On the other hand, unless colonising powers renounce possession in favour, say, of some sort of inter- or super-national control it is hard to see what more they could do than give unrestricted facilities to traders from all nations. What more could anyone do than treat his good and even his not-so-very-good neighbours as himself in such a matter?

Since Britain is a great colonising power she has specially important obligations towards the "backward" tribes and races, in Africa and elsewhere, over whom she has assumed sovereignty. It is idle to pretend that the moral problem is at all simple. Suppose the general moral principle is that it is our duty to exploit the earth but never our fellow men. If so, even if the duty of exploitation is held to include every devastating but bloodless foray into every region where there is promise

of industrial or commercial advantage at any given time, the question remains whether it is possible so to exploit the earth without also exploiting many myriads of mankind.

Clearly, if our aim is to exploit such resources in terms of European and American industrial and commercial standards, we must either settle ourselves where there are ores and oil or employ native labour. In the first case there must be extensive dispossession of the natives; in the second the natives have to change their way of life, and adapt themselves abruptly to a way of life that suits the pattern of European desires. The question is whether many of them can so readjust themselves without ruining their souls. It is not enough to abjure gin-bought fortunes and the lash. We have to ask whether literacy, and technical education, and good medical services, humane as they are in intention, are sufficient, or nearly sufficient, to overcome, or to do more than palliate, the uprooting which the change implies. In particular it is necessary to be critical—I do not say "cynical"—about facile formulae such as the familiar nostrum that we have made ourselves the "trustees" of such tribes and races. Minors are juveniles who, when they reach the presumed age of personal discretion, are also presumed to have the same sort of discretion as their trustees. To say to "backward" communities: "We will work you, clothe you, teach you, physic you and rule you until you are capable of employing, clothing, educating, doctoring and ruling yourselves in *our* way," is, to speak mildly, unimaginative even if there were no grounds for the suspicion that we might not be unprejudiced judges of the hour when we should cease to be trustees. The prior question is whether the retention of our sovereignty until such time as "backward" peoples cease to be backward according to our standards of development is justified at all. It may not be a good thing that our way of life should ever be theirs.

When instead of ruling barbarians we rule ancient civilizations, the problem, though different, is not less acute. Such peoples have developed a distinctive way of life. They may have, and they often have formulated, their own ideas and ideals. They have traded in the past in their own way and, like other peoples, have assimilated many foreign ideas without abandoning their own characteristic attitude. Suppose they will never go our way. Suppose further that, if Europeans left them, the immediate effect would be some internal bloodshed and much temporary loss to the trade of the world. Does it follow that these quick disasters could not be the prelude to a better order than is likely to occur in any other way?

Let us turn from arms to economics, and particularly to moral standards in an era of national economic planning.

"Planning," nowadays, has become a technical term. It is adequately defined by Dr. Hayek* as "central direction of all economic activity according to a single plan, laying down how the resources of society should be 'consciously directed' to serve particular ends in a definite way" when "society" is understood to mean a nation whose "central direction" is the business of its political government.

* *The Road to Serfdom*, p. 26.

It is very commonly believed that such national economic planning is bound to come, and to come quickly, that any nation which hopes to prosper or even to survive must be one whose commerce and industry is government-directed in peace at least as resolutely as in embattled Britain after 1940. This belief may very well be mistaken. The thing is not inevitable and might not be advantageous even when there is international economic competition. Contemporary America is much less favourably disposed towards the notion than contemporary Britain, despite America's highly protective system, and Britain's half-heartedness in abandoning free trade. Nevertheless, there is such an active desire for "planning" in many quarters and so general a readiness in other quarters to accept it either negligently or reluctantly that moralists are bound to consider, very seriously indeed, what its moral implications are likely to be.

One such implication is readily apparent. There is less moral justification for national economic selfishness (or "autarchy") than for national militaristic "autarchy." Where there is no supernational police, self-defence is a duty; and self-defence is the militarist's plea everywhere, sometimes justly and often not. If, however, national economic "autarchy" is defended solely on the ground of national economic self-interest, it is nothing but national selfishness. Selfishness consists in feathering one's own nest without any *disinterested* concern for any others. If you prefer your own feathers, use them. If it suits you to exchange feathers, do so. If it suits you to pilfer from others, do so. Only your own nest matters, whatever the paying policy may be. It is the doctrine of self-help, at one's own discretion, first, last and all the time. Such a doctrine has no moral justification. It is not co-operation for the good of the world, but a collectivist doctrine which deliberately stops short at one's own collection. It may mask its selfishness by arguing that its own interest coincides with world-interest, ignoring the cases in which it isn't so, and ignoring the circumstance that such a fortunate world-result is, by hypothesis, merely incidental and indeed irrelevant to its principles.

But let us consider the intra-national rather than the international morality of "planning," neglecting so far as possible what cannot really be kept separate, the external effects of such a policy.

National economic planning, if it were fully developed, would be national economic totalitarianism, and the implications of government-controlled totalitarianism have been pretty fully developed centuries before the word "totalitarianism" came into fashion. The central principle is that the planners, the government, have the duty of planning all that can practicably be planned and that wherever the planning extends the planned have but one simple moral duty, the duty of obedience. If they are told to invent or improvise they must make a shift to do so. If they are told to sign on the dotted line they must sign on the dotted line.

What is practicable in this way depends on many factors, human as well as material, not all of them constant. Consequently a totalitarian government might often be choosing the wisest course if it left much private life undirected and tried to put as little strain as it could upon

the private moral consciences of the planned. It itself need not be conscienceless. It has the moral duty of promoting *salus populi* according to its lights. In principle, however, all the liberties of the planned, including the liberty of conscience, are held by totalitarians to be government gifts, bestowed by the government at its discretion. If the planned resist *any* government orders they are rebels. Their sole duty is to be free when they are told to be free, unfree when they are told to be unfree.

Such is the principle of totalitarianism, such its moral implications. What happens, then, when the totalitarianism is economic and nothing more? It is easy to say, and moreover it is true, that a man's life is more than his job and more than his bread and butter. Probably we all tend to be far too job-and-bread-and-butter-conscious in most of our social thinking and if we can draw the distinction we *should* draw it even if we cannot divide our lives neatly into economic and non-economic compartments. But if the planned are to be "directed" each into his job, and if all supplies are to be what the government decides should be supplied in the quantity it determines, how can the morals and the conscience of a planned man escape from the planning? His personal, individual conscience—and a man's conscience, unlike his moral principles in general, is exclusively his own—has just about as much scope as the conscience of a customs officer who objects to the taxes on tea.

To be sure, even under a *laissez faire* régime there may be few employments which do not, rather frequently, disturb a sensitive conscience. Such a conscience, however, has usually a widish range of choice, and a reasonable chance of selecting one of the cleaner occupations. She who has scruples about becoming a barmaid may go into domestic service; and on her own responsibility. It is different, quite different, if she is directed into her occupation, is enlisted into the national barmaids' service because the government, not she, decides how many barmaids there should be and how recruited, paying attention to her scruples only as an act of grace, if at all.

As I have said the planners *should* plan for the public good; and it would be possible so to plan even if, in general, great power tends to corrupt deeply. It is from moral idealism that many socialists set their hearts upon planning. They want a society in which men live *with* not *off* one another, and they have little difficulty in showing that wise and philanthropic planning *could* be vastly superior to individual caprice in a host of ways. They may even have the better of the moral argument; but they should face its moral implications, and one of these implications is what has just been stated.

One of the chief contentions of the "planners" is that (successful) "planning" would put an end to the class war. There would be *Gleichschaltung*, i.e., literally, transformation to a uniform current. Every citizen would be a civil or public servant and all would live dedicated lives in the same great national service.

This, if it occurred, would be a *very* successful piece of "planning." It would be a planned millennium for the nation. But even in such a heaven there will still be classes, that is to say, there would have to be an economic hierarchy with grades or functional stratifications involv-

ing huge classes of citizens with a similar status or ranking, upper or lower, as the case might be. There need not be hereditary castes, or a single class division between the propertied and the proletariat, but there would be classes. There never has been a human hierarchy from which class jealousy and class tension has been wholly absent, and even if we are going to be "planned" pretty thoroughly and very soon after the present war, we may be as good as certain that industrial class-tension, the struggle of occupational collective groups, will not suddenly disappear from the new order after saturating the social history of the old.

According to Rosa Luxembourg, justice was only a Rosinante bringing the visionaries who rode it nothing but bruises. Like many other tough communists she maintained that morality, if not chimerical, was just the tactics of class-warfare. What might happen to morality after the class-war was won was another story. During the class-war, as during every other war, nothing matters but victory which cleanses every dirty dodge that works. And the class-war never ceases.

If the premises were accepted, the premises, namely, that a man's job is pretty nearly his life, that he has literally to fight for his job and can only do so effectively if he dedicates himself to his class-battalions without reserve, it would not be easy to qualify the conclusion very radically. We may try to bring justice and humanity *into* warfare as well as to bring them *out of* it, but such attempts in an all-or-nothing struggle are not likely to reach very far. The main question, then, is the accuracy of the premises. Is it true that to-day the paramount duty of every worker is to fight for better working conditions, and, if it is, is his sole resource to fight for his class with all that he has? Unless he renounces morality altogether and puts violence in its place, his position must be that justice and humanity commit him to an all-or-nothing struggle. The class-struggle (he has to maintain) is the *only* means to his just end, and has the distressing but unavoidable implications of that particular means. If anything is probable in these matters, it is surely probable that the resources of justice and humanity are greater than their representation in such a picture, that there are other roads than this terrible road towards the ideal of justice for all.

I shall end this discussion with some remarks upon the population question with special reference to these islands. Unless we are destroyed or are replenished by vast numbers of alien refugees in the prime of life, it is certain that, in the near future, the active workers in our community will have to support a much higher proportion of aged and ageing than ever before. If the birth-rate were to increase spectacularly the problem would right itself after a time. But not quickly. The immediate effect of teeming nurseries would be that the active workers would have to support a great many little children in addition to their own support and their support of so many aged and ageing.

The recent trend of our social arrangements has been in effect to pension the ageing rather early in order to make room for younger and more vigorous workers. This, if there were a sufficiency of younger workers, made for efficiency; and it was humane to the ageing. But the problem, moral as well as economic, is radically altered if the younger

workers are scarce. The solution, so far as I can see, must be lighter work for the aged and ageing *with lighter pay*. It is an old solution in many walks of life, though it is evaded in many others, and it may not seem to be very kind; but it is just, and I think it is genuinely though not sentimentally humane. I might add that we should not be dismayed if only cheap funerals are within our means.

Family endowment is another aspect of the same problem. Whatever the optimum size of the population may be, there must be a desirable rate of replenishment from the nursery. Social justice requires that this essential social service should be adequately supported by society. Since few are prepared to pay more for a suit made by a childful than for a suit made by a childless tailor, the matter cannot be left to competition in the open market. So other means must be found. Both justice and humanity would seem to decree a very considerable change in our social system, something much more radical than the present niggardly scale of income-tax relief, or a flat-rate state allowance of a few shillings per child per week.

Along with this goes the problem of the employment of women in industry and in the professions. Total war has conscripted women for industry, making some attempt at the same time to do justice to the profession of motherhood and to wifely domestic industry. If the proportion of the young (beyond the nursery) to the aged and ageing in our population requires female labour outside the home and its nursery, justice and humanity have many serious and intricate consequential problems; and if they seem to demand that some women, those namely whose lives would be frustrated if they did not have an occupation outside the home as well as within it, should have this double occupation without fantastic strain upon their vitality during the best years of their lives, the resulting problem is profound. But it may well be inescapable.

JOHN LAIRD

A LOST PLEASURE

BETWEEN the two wars the English towns and the surrounding country became more and more disfigured. In London, ten-storey buildings rose up beside and between small houses; and in the suburbs, brick boxes edged the new roads, overran the country, and turned it into that which does not deserve the name of town or suburb or country. These houses provided dormitories for town workers and lacked every other justification. For the worker who returned to them, after the discomfort of travel, found neither the peace of the country, nor what is worth most in the large towns. Gradually everyone who considered the housing chaos became aware that the shift of population, and the demand for more houses in the proximity of the large towns, made it imperative to choose between the control of building and the loss of the country. Every year that the number of buildings per square mile increased, a laissez faire policy became less and less tolerable, and further from true freedom. If a person wishes to wear yellow-striped trousers and line his bathroom with corrugated iron, he feels that it would be a gross infringement of his liberty if the government stepped in and forbade

it. This is the English spirit and no one wishes it to be broken by dictatorial planning. If we had all been living in our own ugly little houses which we had designed in accordance with personal taste, it might be very hard to give up the right to do so. But this is not the case: the Beckfords and Horace Walpoles of the world have been few. The majority do not indulge their idiosyncrasies in building. They live where they can, choosing between the narrow possibilities which offer. If a planned architecture really means buildings designed by people who are disinterested, who know, and who care, then, almost everyone stands to gain.

During the last hundred years, any builder ruled by his desire to make money and licensed by his lack of good taste could erect whatever bungalows and fanciful gabled villas he chose. Usually he was without any genuine interest in the practical needs of houses or in architecture as an art. His clients lacked knowledge about building, but this is not to say that these same clients would not have bought better houses if they had had a choice. In commercial building, some of the largest shops in central London displayed their wealth in pseudo-classic stone facing, reared upon enormous plate glass windows. Some of the smaller municipal buildings of the last twenty years have been good; but those of earlier date, and the most costly among them, are contemptible. The men holding administrative posts in the town concerns were no more to be relied on for architectural taste than a board of shop directors.

What could be more absurd? Architecture, one of the chief arts, and one which most directly touches human living, is left in the control of people who have neither studied it nor cared for it. We praise past civilizations and we throw away our own. We are glad that the early Greeks and Renaissance Italians and medieval French had appreciative eyes and made fine things, yet we don't ask for the work or even the opinion of contemporary people who have just such trained eyes, such appreciation and skill. We ignore them and let any spiritless commercially-minded human animal create the cities we live in, and spoil the landscapes outside them. In practical matters such absurdity cannot arise. If a good drainage system is wanted, the arrangements for providing it are not left to the people who say they don't know anything about it, but they know what they like. That is the sort of thing which is only tolerated in the arts.

It is not encouraging to hear of the lack of co-ordination between the plan for the City and that of the rest of London, or of the City's decision to take the middle path of compromise. At the same time, it is very good to hear that the bombed areas, London, Plymouth, Coventry, and Southampton, have made complete rebuilding plans, in the faith that the sheer reasonableness of the recommendations of the Barlow, Scott, and Uthwatt reports will force good new legislation. The primary aspects of the proposed rebuilding schemes are receiving wide and varied attention. This article does not deal with these, but calls attention to some details which, though small in themselves, will be important when the plans are realised, and which it is not too early to consider. The suggestions are made from the limited view of a person whose main

interest in architecture has been centred in the visual pleasures to be enjoyed from fine buildings, while at the same time agreeing with Mr. J. M. Richards' dictum that "architecture is a social art related to the life of the people it serves, not an exercise in applied ornament."

In a letter to *The Times* in June, Mr. Charles Wheeler, R.A., wrote: "In the reconstruction period there will be a welter of urgent and necessary things to be done, and the determining factors will be, I fear, speed and economy, neither of which will lead our new buildings in the footsteps of the old. It may be inevitable that we break with the old traditions, but must all grace and richness be sacrificed to plainness and utility, and will our architecture be stripped naked of the carvings and sculptures which all great historic styles display and which, by their absence, left so many pre-war buildings cold and barren? The post-war style of architecture cannot be dictated, but it will be the poorer if it disregards the great English heritage of which we have the right to be proud." Perhaps the Functionalists would dismiss this as nonsense. If so, how far would they be right? In their ardour for fitness of purpose, these people declare that in most cases where they find this fitness they also find beauty. Can this really be true? When one thinks of the slight differences in proportion which make all the difference between the aesthetic value of an object and its worthlessness, one rather doubts it.

There was a time at the birth of modern architecture when fitness for purpose seemed all; now it must be accounted as basic but incomplete. Mr. Richards, in spite of his great sympathy for new work, has said, "modern architecture has been passing through a sort of 'puritan' phase, in which the negative virtues of simplicity and efficiency have been allowed to dominate." The cause may lie in the necessarily slow development of architecture. Many different architects have tried many different ideas, but few have had the chance to go from one big modern building to another; so there has been little learning by trial and error. For this reason, architecture has not moved very far since it returned to straightforward expression after the decadence of the last century. When the visual arts in England at the end of the nineteenth century reached the high-water mark of futility, some who practised them turned away from superficiality to the forgotten essentials. The bare bones became all that mattered. Painting went parallel with building. Cubist painting was born of a drastic return to first principles which were unconsidered in the photographic inanities then being exhibited at the Salon and the Royal Academy. Attention was given to design, solidarity, colour, for their own sakes; and much which painting may (in addition to these) legitimately concern itself with was left out. Architecture followed the same course; it exalted the engineer, fitness for purpose was all, the only beauty allowed was directed by utility. The scope of such building was as limited as the scope of cubist painting. It left out too much. The human eye has delights which utility will never provide for, which in painting cannot be reduced to a few major values, or in architecture cannot depend upon usefulness. When one looks through a volume of photographs of Le Corbusier's work, in spite of admiration for its merits, the constant reappearance of the rectangle begins to pall. Will modern architecture continue in this limited and bare path?

The reconsideration of two new London buildings may relieve such doubts. Take for examples the new Waterloo Bridge of Sir Giles Gilbert Scott and Messrs. Valmyer, and Watson-Hart's building for the B.B.C. Neither of these could be called cold and barren; the one escapes by virtue of its subtlety, and the other by its use of right decoration. Subtlety and good decoration are tested values of the buildings of all ages, and live again in buildings which essentially belong to the present. Waterloo Bridge is a splendid example of a great simplicity which had it been obvious would have been merely efficient engineering. It is more; it is good architecture: that is to say, it is building with the power to delight. Its only decoration are the four string mouldings along its upper edge. The arches have grace, yet they are not weak. In some lights, approaching from the west the arches appear to have a bevel; on coming nearer, that which appeared to be shadow cast by the bevelled edge shows itself to be a flat surface of concrete, and the darker colour of this in contrast to the Portland stone above it gave the illusion of the bevel. It is very ingenious. If this concrete edge had been stone, matching the rest, the bridge would have looked heavier and lost much of the pleasing proportion of the arches. The piers, which are probably almost wholly accounted for by their function, give views full of interest to the eye which looks merely for pleasure in things seen. The steps from the embankment level to the bridge are well contrived. The sum of these and a thousand other details makes a new Waterloo Bridge which enriches London.

In contrast to this, Broadcasting House has its starkness relieved by carved decoration. It has a mass which excites, and takes real advantage of the curved site. Above the main entrance, Eric Gill's carving of Ariel and Prospero is an example of good architectural sculpture. It forms an accent of just the right weight. In itself it is a lovely thing. To achieve the movement and lightness of Ariel with a truly sculptural treatment is no mean achievement. The globe on which the group stands is very right, as is the whole south front, with the exception of the vulgar modernistic clock at the top. The bands of ornament and the coat of arms on the west side are greatly to be regretted and detract from the Gill reliefs above the doorways, and from the whole building. After the good sense which employed Eric Gill to do the major carvings, this lapse is hard to understand. Possibly it was executed from a design done on paper by someone who had never carved. It has the mechanical exactness which a trade firm will give, and its quality is no better than could have been turned out of a biscuit mould. It is worth describing the method which has been much used in recent times and has produced so much bad architectural decoration and accounts for much that we despise. The design is drawn in the architect's office and the execution left to a trade firm, who, in the case of a complicated design, put one man on to make a clay model from the drawing, and another to translate this into stone. Necessarily the result is lifeless. This indirect method dies out slowly; and because it has produced much rigidly meaningless ornament, some reasonable people have come to prefer their buildings plain, and feel that to live in a structure as bleak as a factory is a return to sanity. But reaction against what is disliked is not enough; there

must be creation in which the spirit of the best work of the past comes out freshly in new contexts. The realization of this lies in the hands of the people employed on the job.

Words can do so little, but they may be used to implore the powerful people who plan to leave no stone unturned when they select architects, implore them to pick out from the many who have practical gifts, the few who, in addition, can give aesthetic meaning to stone and brick concrete. Also it should be asked that the plans be exhibited before buildings of public interest materialise, so that all may see them and make their criticisms.

How can there be any confidence among those who care for the greatness of cities, when they are sickened by the sight of fantastically bad examples from the recent past, which have not only been imposed upon us now for generations to come, but have also squandered opportunities offered on the grandest scale Add to this the dismay which is caused by the aesthetic idiocy of officials, who allow, for example, the disfigurement of Piccadilly Circus and Trafalgar Square with war-savings posters which are an outrage upon sense and taste. A realistic view of the sea cuts through the base of Nelson's column: why should anything so visually shocking be expected to make people save their money? To plead that this is temporary, does not excuse it. If there is virtue in visual impressions to affect the lives of human beings at all, then it should be the aim to make everything good of its kind. And the government, which has every reason and every opportunity to set the best example, should be the last to offend. In spite of a few outstanding achievements, then, and some hopeful signs and movements, there is still little enough to inspire confidence. If matters are to be improved, it will take all that can be done by everybody who cares about it to bring it home to everybody else, and especially to every kind of official, that the dignity and reputation of the nation is concerned in seeing that the best available talent is employed on every job of any public importance. Let us try to make it impossible to have foisted on us again a Regent Street, a Port of London Head Office, a Bank of England. There have been found within us resources capable of defending liberty on the grand scale. With the greatest opportunity in history wide open to us, are we to fail in building our cities because although the resources are there we haven't the imagination and the will to use them? URSULA EDGCUMBE

THE CRISES OF CIVILIZATION

IT is not without significance that after reigning for eight centuries the Heaven God of Greek religion was replaced by Plato's Form of the Good, and that the Form of the Good, after being influential for the succeeding eight centuries, was replaced by the Good God of Christianity. From natural religion to ethics and from ethics to ethical theism. To-day and throughout the nineteenth century the historic process has been engaged in a work of evaporisation whereby the Good God is being reduced to the Good.

But history does not repeat itself: the Good as the conscious goal of modern endeavour is something very different from Plato's Form of the Good. In Plato's century, as in the century of Confucius, moral philosophy was a novelty; it was an enquiry into conduct invited by the extensive breakdown of immemorial custom. The city-state of the Greek, and the feudal state of the Chinese, civilization were in the throes of crisis. Athens was a city-state, but it was also an empire. And a feudal principality in the time of Confucius was as large as a modern Chinese province. Empires and provinces exceed the limits of a face-to-face society such as a family or clan. And it is this face-to-face character which makes such a society the natural matrix of morality. There you discover by day-to-day experimenting that there are certain kinds of behaviour which your fellow men refuse to tolerate just as there are other kinds which they are prepared to endorse. If your group is a hunting clan, you will be educated in the art of hunting, will be provided with the necessary weapons, and throughout the enterprise will be spiritually sustained by the magico-religious rites transforming the hunted animal into the totem of the clan. You share the ends of group life as well as the means thereto; you share the initiatives and the fruits; you share all values, economic and cultural, in the proportion of your needs, and you sustain the life of the community in the measure of your powers.

The morals of such a face-to-face community are creative, experimental, and social. And these morals constitute a stable morality because at the base there is a correlated system of acquired habits operating unconsciously. Of course every day brings its problems, its economic and social problems, and problem posing and solving are conscious acts. For every day we are called upon—and the primitive clansman is included in the 'we'—to transform, if we can, the good of our situation into the better. But under the pressure of his unconsciously working habits, the clansman can solve spontaneously the great majority of his problems. His social tact, if his problem is social, and his craftsman's touch, if the problem is economic, operate with the spontaneity of the artist brushing in new values on the canvas.

But the human situation is completely transformed when a food-gathering clan of a few hundred souls living face-to-face in intimate contiguity is replaced by a large-scale society of many hundred thousands. These thousands are associated in their labours, but association does not necessarily imply community. The ox is associated with the ploughman, but he does not consciously appreciate the ploughman's purposes. Nor does the ox share in the surplus beyond subsistence level created by their conjoint labours.

A very qualified kind of community exists when a Pharaoh can round up a hundred thousand Egyptian labourers to build him a pyramid so that his mortal remains might be embalmed into immortality. Only to the extent the labourers believed that the immortality of the Pharaoh ensured the immortality of Egypt could it be said that association in labour was redeemed by community in faith. And how much was association worth when imperial Athens required the islanders of Melos to continue the payment of a tax out of which Athens, but not Melos, was

made beautiful? And when Greece and Judea were forcibly associated with the Roman Empire, could it be said that their share in the world market was an adequate compensation for the loss of their cultural autonomy? And when the Franks and Lombards and Visigoths planted themselves on the romanised peoples of Greece and Italy and Spain as aristocratic rulers, claiming half to two-thirds of their subjects' income and giving nothing in return except an occasional permission to survive, was it at all certain that urban and agricultural civilization was worth while? This way of living increased wealth and population and so provided the economic basis for an extraordinary development of the arts. But at what a cost in human suffering and degradation! For fifty thousand years palaeolithic and neolithic men had ordered their lives on a basis of face-to-face community. The face-to-face community was the firm foundation of their lives—of their religion, culture, economy, and morals. By comparison, the five to six thousand years of urban and agricultural civilization, from the earliest alluvial civilizations of the Nile, the Tigris-Euphrates and the Indus, down to the Western civilization of to-day, reveal themselves historically as a turbulent sea of swelling and breaking societies.

Mental process is the response—the creative and experimental response—to what is problematic in the situation resulting from the impact of the external world—the physical and social worlds—upon our individual lives. This instrumentalist view of the mind's function has been worked out by Professsor Dewey with the generality traditional to philosophy, and at the same time with an optimism which reflects—or did reflect until the other day—the self-confidence of American civilization. America has its problems, but Americans used to believe that they could find the solutions. But how very extensive and acute must the mental processes involved in consciousness become, when civilization itself is the problem! Dewey has defined philosophy as a-coming-to-consciousness of civilization. But why become conscious of civilization? As long as a society is a going concern, its civilization is an ever-renewed synthesis of economic, moral, and cultural values. When life is satisfactory, why watch yourself living? Why analyze and criticize? When the going is good, you act out your morals, you don't discuss them. You practise your religion; you don't theorise about it. It is when a civilization breaks down that all its values become the subject of criticism. Philosophy is the criticism of civilization.

When a civilized society breaks down, it is usually in the political and economic spheres that the malady begins. For a civilized society is not a face-to-face community: it is a group of sub-groups. The sub-groups are usually economic classes—landowners, landworkers, craftsmen, merchants—each with a distinct function in the economy of labour, and each exerting a pull on the surplus which has no necessary proportion to what each has contributed to it. There are also professional classes, such as priests and poets, who also have a claim on the surplus. These economic classes may have a common culture, religious, moral, and aesthetic, as was to some extent the case in Ancient Egypt. On the other hand, we may find within the same politico-economic framework every conceivable difference of language, religion, and outlook as between

the cultural standards of ruling and subjected classes. The Persian and Roman Empires are instances.

The economic reacts upon the cultural. The wider the economic gulf between the classes, the more do cultural differences become pronounced. And when a society has neither economic nor cultural unity, it is a candidate for extinction. But though the cultural is infected by the economic, the cultural is much the tougher partner in the joint business of civilization. Culture can survive even when a defeated and broken people are living in Babylonian exile. The educated Greek sold into Roman slavery can still be loyal to the culture-heroes reverenced by his ancestors. For culture, once it has been created, can be preserved at a low cost for storage and transport. Books are useful although not indispensable; and books can be organised into bibles.

A culture preserved in books or in verbal tradition, and no longer fertilized by the practical every-day life of the people, undergoes a strange metamorphosis; for such a culture does not celebrate life as it is being lived in the present, but the memory of a life that is no more. Living ideas are ideas shaping action. Living ideas are tested and transformed by action. When to the defeated, the exiled, the broken-hearted, action in the external world on the roads that had once led to victory is no longer possible, thought becomes intraverted. It builds systems that satisfy aesthetically, but not practically. And if the impulse to make a harmony out of concepts also fails, the thinker turns into a scholiast. Scholasticism is an interminable epitaph upon a dead civilization.

When in the aftermath of civilizational breakdown the political and the economic perish, while the cultural is salvaged and embalmed, a dualist world-view captures men's minds. Dualism speaks eloquently in a whole string of antitheses: the spiritual and the secular, the mental and the corporeal, the cultural and the economic, the transcendent and the contingent, the eternal and the temporal. Another string is provided by the antitheses of soul and flesh, church and state, this world and the other world. That the highest place in the hierarchy of values should be assigned to the cultural values still living in men's hearts and minds is understandable. In the twilight of civilization, when the whole framework of practical living has been shattered, it is natural to esteem contemplation above action, theory above practice, pure science above applied science. Moreover there is an argument for the ascetic's denial of the world. The ascetic is doing the important work of salvaging cultural values in an epoch of economic distress. By reducing his claims on the surplus to the barest level on which a celibate can subsist, he is helping to finance the work of salvage. His abstinence has the merit of creating a cultural capital against the time when an integral civilization is again possible.

Philosophy, it has been suggested, arose historically as an inquest on the death of a civilization. The primary interest of philosophy was not in science but in morals. How was it that civilized men could be guilty of matricide? How was it that they came to murder the alma mater of all the values—their community? And why were the matricides not

restrained by religion, the tutelary guardian and genius of civilization? In Greece, as in China and India, enquiry into morals developed into an enquiry into religion. The broad outcome of this twofold enquiry is remarkable. The gods change their nature: from being concrete persons they become abstract principles. How did this change come about, and what is its significance?

I shall follow Professor Dewey in the view that a man is religious when he is engaged upon a special kind of aesthetic construction. The elements of this construction are his own self, environing society, and environing nature; and the object of the construction is that imaginative totality we call the Universe. A man is religious when he is a cosmic artist enjoying the Universe in himself and himself in the Universe. Religions are landscapes of totality; they will differ in composition according to the choice of foreground—whether it is the self or society or nature which occupies the foreground—and also according to the depth of feeling with which these three elements are integrated.

Artists employ symbols. To the cosmic artist, symbols are indispensable. How is he to suggest the fusion of the Many into the One? How is he to suggest that the community whose values he has absorbed is alive in him, and that the community which has found a way of life with nature is part of nature? He can make these suggestions if his symbol is a person—a divine and yet a full-blooded person such as a Zeus or an Apollo. Apollo is the patron of the arts, Zeus of morals; they are both great persons and great forces of nature. The gods do all the things a man does, but they do them better—they do them in the grand style. To have faith in the gods is to have faith in civilization—in the economic as well as in the cultural values of civilization; for economic values are impossible without the co-operation of nature, and cultural values are impossible without the co-operation of the community.

Suppose now that the community as a political and economic unity disintegrates, and that only its cultural values survive. Can a divine person any longer be an appropriate symbol for the community? A person is an economic as well as a personal agent; he both acts and feels, he both works and contemplates. But in a bankrupt society the sons of the community are no longer esteemed honourable persons: they have fallen to be the animated tools of their conquerors. And so what is excellent in civilization is no longer thought of as a person but as an aspect or fraction of a person—in other words, as an abstract moral principle.

We can see now how the disintegration and disruption of communities accounts not only for the rise of moral philosophy, but also for the substance of its teaching. The classical moralists, a Plato or a Kant, find their moral principles not inside society but beyond it. Was Plato to look for the moral ideal in contemporary Athens, which having lost its empire and its freedom, was torn by class conflicts as savage as any between our Whites and Reds? Was Kant to locate the moral ideal in the Prussia of Frederick the Great? Is the moral ideal then homeless? And if so, how can it have authority to invade our homes?

The answer is that the moral principles of a Kant or a Plato are not really derived from a super-social, super-historical, super-temporal source.

But that does not mean that they were derived from the contemporary practice of Prussia or of Athens. Plato's moral heritage dates back to the Greeks of Homer and to the Greeks—if they could be called Greeks —who were once at the neolithic level of moral culture. And Kant, as far as moral culture was concerned, was a citizen of Jerusalem, of Athens, and of Rome, as well as a citizen of Prussia. Kant grew up in a Christian home. And the Christian Church is a cultural institution whose historic function it has been to preserve the cultural values of Antiquity. Cultural values could be salvaged, economic and political values could not. Economic and political values are debilitated if not destroyed, once the territorial organisation of the State has ceased to function.

The super-historical moral Absolute which the classical moralists invoke is, in fact, both historical and experimental. History is still at work; but it works invisibly and unconsciously in the minds and hearts of men as a result of the transmission through the ages of our moral heritage. The classical moralists invoke conscience; but conscience is the voice of history and not the voice of God.

Mankind has tried out many forms of association since it achieved its first substantial success with the face-to-face communities of the Neolithic Age. Such societies have proved themselves extraordinarily stable. But civilized societies, dependent economically on a surplus derived principally from agriculture and now latterly from industry, have very rarely been stable. Neolithic men have no recorded history. The theme of recorded history is the experiment of civilization conducted by large-scale and consciously organised societies. And thus history is an endless chronicle of crises. The lot of our generation that has experienced two world wars is not, therefore, as hard as it might appear.

To-day the problem before mankind is the construction of a new world order. What are the social forms which will have to be interrelated, if not fused, for such an order to be possible?

First, we possess already an economic association which is co-extensive with the globe. Then, we have fifty or so political associations which usually take the form of sovereign states. Again, we have five or six distinctive cultural associations that are in charge of the world religions and operate independently of political and economic frontiers. I refer to the Christian, Moslem, Buddhist, Hindu, and Jewish churches. Economically mankind is already one; politically it is becoming one; culturally it is still very far from being one.

How can mankind achieve the integral character of a face-to-face community?

Let us not be dismayed. We are living in an age in which the radio has made it physically possible for one speaker to address the whole human race. And a new art form—the film—is being developed which can be shown in all the cities of the earth. Artists have ever been our leading traffickers in world culture. World art is young. We are watching the dawn of immense possibilities. In Dewey's words: "We are in search of the Great Community." And the end of our search may be nearer than we have hitherto imagined.

JOHN KATZ

BOOK REVIEWS

THE JOURNEY HOME. A Report on the Problems of Demobilization, prepared by Mass-Observation for the Advertising Service Guild. Murray, 6/-.

This interesting and instructive report is based on 570 interviews, half in London and half in other parts of the country. The sampling has been carefully conducted so as to represent as far as possible the views and feelings of different cross-sections of the community. The report claims to be essentially qualitative in character. The statistics show how things stand for a moment in history, but the basic mood is more stable. Cynicism and pessimism about demobilization and the future have increased since 1939. Faith in leadership, politicians, and the Press has declined. Most people anticipate "an anarchic future into which unemployment and unfettered competition for jobs on a declining labour market fit. The mental picture is a future like the worst of the past"—1918 over again. And the more people think this, the greater the desire for relaxation, less responsibility, more private adventure, and, in the Services, to get demobbed as quickly as possible.

On the other hand, there is a clearer idea about what people want for Britain after the war. Though they want security (good food, good housing, and good wages for themselves and family), they also want a wider objective; not only Freedom From, but also Freedom For—something positive and constructive that will engender enthusiasm. The danger is that they will accept far less than this through apathy and self-interest (Beveridge, and other plans, watered down), which may keep them quiet; but in this case their deeper feelings will become frustrated.

An understanding of these underlying doubts and fears is essential to forward-planning. The only way to disperse them is to build up a picture of the coming Peace which is different from the last, and which calls for a different personal outlook.

We are in agreement with the writer of the excellent review in *The Listener* that Section VIII on Priorities is the most important, not only because of its content but also because of its method of analysing public opinion. **A.F.D.**

MAINLY FOR MEN. By Ethel M. Wood, C.B.E. Gollancz, 3s. This pamphlet is an account of the problems affecting the employment of women in government departments and industry in wartime, and is an indictment of the male attitude towards these problems. It is written by the Secretary of the Committee on Woman Power. From its title one's tendency is to cry down and pooh-pooh the book, but on perusal one's opinion will veer round sharply, for, besides giving an accurate account of the facts, the author has a nice sense of the use of irony.

The employment policy of the different government departments is described in detail, showing marked variation in treatment, the Board of Trade coming out as the most progressive.

On the industrial side, the difficulty is not primarily the admission of women, for the Amalgamated Engineering Union—the most powerful trade union in the world—have already admitted them to full membership; and if war were on a permanent basis the problem of women's employment would solve itself. The main difficulty with regard to industry is the correct remuneration for work done, for a woman rarely obtains more than two-thirds of a man's rate. In this connection, the author quotes a peculiar case of a girl who on being charged with male impersonation stated that by changing her name from Muriel to Michael and by donning a pair of pants her remuneration rose from 50/- per week to £5.10.0.

The author admits the difficulty of organising women, and attributes this to historical causes and the treatment of a job as only a stop-gap prior to marriage. What needs stressing is that industrial employment is so depressing that most women will exchange it for life in even the most unattractive of homes.

The book contains a witty description of the obstructionist tactics (the author calls it the Tweedledee Tweedledum method) of Government departments when faced by a logically unassailable argument. It is of wider interest than the specific one of women's questions, being common to every sphere of negotiation.

The underlying cause of women's serfdom is not touched upon in this book, perhaps rightly so as not coming within its scope. On the other hand, the author frequently refers to the problem as if it was a male versus female issue, which fundamentally it isn't. It constantly needs restating that the exploitation of woman is only a part of the general exploitation of anybody and everybody by

anybody and everybody who is in a position to exploit. The further emancipation of women will be parallel with a change in the consciousness of society and the elimination of human exploitation as its main motive power. M.L.B.

EDUCATION AND THE UNIVERSITY. By F. R. Leavis. Chatto & Windus, 6s.

PLATO AND MODERN EDUCATION. By Sir Richard Livingstone. C.U.P., 1s.

The enormous and increasing complexity of social organization, and the concomitant increasing specialization, require for the sake of adequate control of our civilization that the universities shall provide a humane education capable of inducing a critical awareness of the cultural tradition, a common consciousness of values, a perceptive wisdom about ends. This kind of education has been destroyed by the social processes whose results make the urgency of the demand for its replacement. None of the specialist studies carried on at the universities will itself meet the need; no orientation course or prescribed reading could prove adequate; and Classical Greats tends to produce a type of mind not flexible and adventurous enough to face the novelty and the opportunity of the modern situation. The very idea of a university is endangered by present tendencies and stresses.

Mr. Leavis argues that the required humane education must be based on a literary-critical discipline, and bring into relation diverse fields of knowledge and thought outside strict literary studies; it must be "a means of bringing the various essential kinds of specialised knowledge and training into effective relation with informed general intelligence, humane culture, social conscience, and political will." In an English university, it is the honours school of English which naturally offers the best promise of such an education. But Mr. Leavis has no difficulty in showing that the English School does not in fact give a tolerable approach to this education: intelligent cramming wins the prizes, and that determines both methods and results. He sketches a new model of Part II of the English Tripos at Cambridge, which he would have open to qualified specialists in other studies. The general theme of study proposed is England in the seventeenth century (the watershed from which lies the view back into the middle ages and forward to our own times). The method of teaching would be by prepared discussion rather than by lectures; the method of examination, by the evaluation of 'pieces of work' on several aspects of the general theme carried out during the course. Work on the main theme would be supplemented by an excursion into the middle ages (a study of Dante), and into French literature, and by an essay on the transition to our own times. The result, without sacrificing, more than is necessary for the purpose, rigorous standards of exact scholarship in the fields covered, would be a mind disciplined in the evaluative judgement of language, and acquainted in concrete terms with the relations between the economic, the political, the moral, and the spiritual factors in the tradition in which our civilization moves: not a finished mind, but one vigorous, trained, and eager and able to go forward, matured in a sense of human possibilities difficult of achievement.

The problem of which Mr. Leavis sketches this solution must be tackled by the universities. In the great expansion of knowledge in the 19th century, their narrow-minded policy left them far behind. The danger now is not that they will lag behind in the great work of humanizing and integrating education, but that this work will not be done at all, for where else can it be done? It must be plainly recognised that no proposal on the lines sketched by Mr. Leavis has much chance of being favourably received by university authorities. His suggestions seem merely to involve not insuperable difficulties in the adjustment of the curriculum; in fact they are revolutionary, and challenge established principles of academic teaching. Perhaps any promising solution must be revolutionary.

Sir Richard Livingstone in his Rede lecture "Plato and Modern Education" gives a lucid and eloquent account of the same unmistakable and urgent problem. His modestly conceived solution asks for recognition by the universities of their responsibility for concern with ends, for some study of religion or moral philosophy (without examination) in every degree course, and for a new spirit to inform all teaching with the recognition of values. This approach is very much more likely to recommend itself to the authorities, but it would be surprising if anything attempted on these lines did not in practice prove either nugatory or reactionary. The stubborn fact is that the universities are extremely unlikely to produce bold and adequate solutions because their own development proceeds on lines which partly make the problem. It calls for an informed and strenuous public opinion, allied to organized adult education, to demand a radical remedy. The education of public opinion for this purpose could hardly begin with a better text-book than "Education and The University," by Mr. Leavis. H.J.B.

TO THE READER

This journal, which is published by The Ethical Union in a new format in place of "The Ethical Societies' Chronicle," will be expanded when paper is made available. Meanwhile, it is necessarily compressed and inadequate. "By what we have said you see our intentions"; if you are in sympathy with them, we ask you to send a subscription for one year (2/4, post free) to The Ethical Union, 41/42, Chandos House, Buckingham Gate, London, S.W.1.

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